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VOCATIONAL STATUS OF THE NEGRO
GRADUATES OF THE HIGH SCHOOL
IN YOAKUM, TEXAS

By

Johnie Bernita Shropshire

A Thesis in Education Submitted in Partial
Pulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Bachelor of Science

in the

Division of Arts and Sciences

of the

Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College

Prairie View, Texas

May 1, 1936

The problems growing out of the unemployment situation in Texas has attracted the attention of the legislators in Texas. This attention is centered upon the recent graduates of

Dedicated to

in college and to **My Mother**

Mrs. Gertrude Wright

and to

The purpose of the survey made in the cities and towns of Texas was **My Sweetheart** most of the high school

graduates are **Mr. Othelda Graham** whose parents are interested in their welfare with this information.

Scope

The scope of information required concerned high school graduates of the rural. In securing this information a city-wide drive was given; each section of the city was considered. The geographical area covered Texas, Oklahoma, and the surrounding states. The geographical area covered Texas, Oklahoma, and the surrounding states. The geographical area covered Texas, Oklahoma, and the surrounding states.

The method used was the questionnaire interview system. The survey was conducted six days, February 1 through February 6.

INTRODUCTION

The problems growing out of the unemployment situation in Texas has attracted the attention of the educators in Texas. This attention is centered upon the recent graduates of the high schools because so few are in college and so few employed.

Purpose

The purpose of the survey made in the cities and towns of Texas was to find out what most of the high school graduates are doing, and to acquaint those persons interested in their welfare with this information.

Scope

The scope of information received concerned high school graduates of the rural. In securing this information a city-wide drive was given; each section of the city was considered. The geographical area covered Negro neighborhoods of all types; mixed Negro neighborhoods, and the poorest Negro neighborhoods.

The method used was the questionnaire interview shown below. The survey was conducted six days, February 3 through February 8.

Below will be found the compiled data from the survey made in Yoakum, Texas.

Personal Data Concerning
49 High School Graduates

The study made in Yoakum, Texas concerned 49 graduates of which 31 were female and 18 were male.

The age of the group ranged from 17 to 23 years. See Table I for details regarding age of graduates.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF 49 GRADUATES OF
YOAKUM, TEXAS ACCORDING TO AGE

Age	Number of Graduates
17	7
18	8
19	8
20	11
21	6
22	12
23	4
Total	49

Following is a table showing the number of brothers and sisters by families.

Considering their birth place it was found that 30 graduates were born in the city, and 16 in the rurals. The remaining 3 graduates of Yoakum High School did not state.

To gain a complete account of the graduates, some information concerning their parents was collected. There were 25 parents that were born in rural areas, and 22 were born in urban. Two graduates did not state whether their parents were urban or rural.

It was further found that 15 graduates' parents were separated, 22 not separated, and 2 refused to give anything about the marital status of their parents. Thirty-four graduates stated that parents owned home before graduation; 11 did not own homes, and 4 graduates did not state whether parents owned homes or not. There were 11 graduates whose parents owned other property, and 33 whose parents did not own any other property. Of this number 11 owned rent houses, and 5 owned land.

Considering the marital status of the graduates, 14 were married and 35 were not married. Of the 14 married, 7 had no children, 5 had 1, and 2 had 2. Five had been married less than 6 months, 3 one year, 4 two years, 1 three years, and 1 four years.

Following is a table showing the number of brothers and sisters by families.

TABLE II DISTRIBUTION OF 49 GRADUATES
OF YOAKUM HIGH SCHOOL ACCORDING TO
(a) SISTERS, (b) BROTHERS,
(c) BROTHERS AND SISTERS COMBINED

Note: Read table as follows: 15 graduates
had no sisters, 9 graduates had no
brothers, and 15 graduates had neither
brother nor sister.

Number	Sisters	Brothers	Brothers and Sisters Combined
0	15	9	15
1	11	17	0
2	7	9	3
3	5	3	5
4	2	7	2
5	0	1	3
6	5	2	9
7	1	0	0
8	1	1	0
9	1	0	1
10	1	0	3
11	0	0	1
12	0	0	3
13	0	0	3
14	0	0	1

The total number of fathers and mothers living were 34. Number of graduates with fathers only living, 6; number of mothers only living, 8; and neither, 1.

College Attendance

Five of the 49 high school graduates have attended college while 40 have never attended an institution of higher learning. The other four graduates did not state whether they had or had not attended college.

The occupational distribution of the graduates showed that only 3 worked while in high school, and 46 did not work. Two had office work, and 1 played in an orchestra. Checking upon those who worked, 2 part-time, and 1 regular. It might be interesting to know that the graduate who played in an orchestra in high school is now living in Houston and is playing in an orchestra.

For the number of graduates who worked in high school, the wage distribution is found in table III.

TABLE III DISTRIBUTION OF GRADUATES
ACCORDING TO WAGE RECEIVED WHILE
IN HIGH SCHOOL

Wage per month			Number of Graduates
\$ 5	-	9	1
10	-	14	1
15	-	19	1
Total			3

Those five graduates who attended college gave several reasons for discontinuing their college courses. The reasons were: lack of finance, illness, wanted to work, not interested, and not fully qualified.

Those 40 persons who did not attend college at any time gave the following reasons for not attending: lack of finance, marriage, wanted to work, not interested in college, and wanted to join the navy. The financial situation presents the largest problem, for 40 persons were unable to attend college due to the lack of finance.

Five of the 49 high school graduates did not desire to extend their education; while 40 did not want to go to an institution of higher learning. Four persons did not state whether they were or were not in favor of extending their education.

It was found that one graduate worked five months, one six months, and then one twelve months while in school. The following table shows the numbers of jobs held over the last four-year period and number of graduates holding.

TABLE IV DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF JOBS HELD
OVER A PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS

Number of Jobs		Number of Graduates
1	23
2	32
3	5
4	9

The economic situation may be better seen if the reasons for changing jobs each year were cited.

TABLE V DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS
FOR GRADUATES CHANGING JOBS

Reasons	Number of Graduates
Illness	1
Left for school	1
Transferred	1
Married	2
Low wages	2
Better position	2
Use of white help	6
Employee left town	7
Time expired	8

The present occupations of the number of graduates working is shown in the table below.

TABLE VI DISTRIBUTION OF PRESENT
OCCUPATIONS OF GRADUATES

Present Occupation	Number of Graduates
Hand man	1

TABLE VI
(Continued)

Present Occupation	Number of Graduates
Office girl	1
Maid	1
Nursing baby	1
Tanner	1
Teaching	1
Insurance	1
Barber	2
Clerk	2
Domestic	2
Waiter	2
G. C. C. Camp	3
Sewing	3
Odd jobs	3
Housewife	5
Cooking	6

The study further revealed that of the number of graduates now employed 15 worked regular, 8 part-time, 4 entire year, and 8 graduates did not state.

The present monthly wage of the graduates now employed is seen in the tabulation below.

TABLE VII DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES' PRESENT WAGE

Wage				Number of Graduates			
\$	5	-	9	.	.	.	1
	10	-	14	.	.	.	10
	15	-	19	.	.	.	5
	20	-	24	.	.	.	4
	25	-	29	.	.	.	4
	30	-	34	.	.	.	2
	35	-	39	.	.	.	0
	40	-	44	.	.	.	4
	45	-	49	.	.	.	0
	50	-	54	.	.	.	2
	55	-	59	.	.	.	0
	60	-	64	.	.	.	1
Total							35

Two graduates did not state their present wage.

The study further revealed that the wage of 10 graduates was affected by experience. Five graduates were

promoted because of experience, while 5 other graduates' salary was cut. Twenty of the graduates' wages were not affected, and 5 graduates did not state.

The length of time the jobs were held by the graduates varied to a large extent. Ten held jobs under 6 months, 3 over 6 months, 5 over 1 year, and 12 over two years. Three of the graduates did not state how long they had been holding jobs.

The study showed that school aided very little in securing employment for graduates after leaving school. Of the 49 graduates interviewed only 8 stated that the school was instrumental in aiding them in securing jobs. Eight graduates did not state, and 33 graduates stated that the school did not aid them.

Many of the graduates stated that the courses they had taken in high school did not help them in any way. Others, were glad to state that their high school course had been valuable to them.

The table below gives the courses and number of graduates the courses proved valuable in securing jobs.

TABLE VIII COURSES BEING OF
VALUE IN SECURING JOBS

Courses	Number of Graduates
History	1
Typing	2
Reading	2
Cooking	5
Mathematics	5
Sewing	5
English	10
Total	30

The Influence of 49 High School Graduates Upon Their Community

The study showed that of the 49 high school graduates 47 took to church, 15 belonged to social clubs, and 1 to a lodge. The lodge did not have much influence upon the graduates. Other activities engaged in by graduates were:

Activities	Number of Graduates
Shadow Club	4
Y. C. D. C.	8
Members of Sunday School . .	15
Members of Junior Church . .	20
Choral Club	8

Positions Held in Organization:

Church Reporter	1
President of Shadow Club	1
Vice President	1
President of Junior Church	2
Junior Deacon	2
Usher	2
Secretary of Junior Church	2
Sunday School Teacher	4
Secretary of Sunday School	4

In summarizing the data compiled from the survey, we find the following:

1. That the age of graduates ranged from 17 to 23, and that there were more females interviewed than males.
2. It was found that most of the jobs were common labor, and the wages received from these jobs held do not afford scarcely enough for subsistence.
3. The study showed that few graduates were put out of work, and white help was put in their place.
4. The courses taken in high school have been inadequate and of little value in aiding graduates in securing employment.

Conclusions

1. Vocational courses should be revised to fit the needs of the graduates, as they are inadequate and of little help to those graduates not planning to go to college, as most of the graduates that finish high school remain at home. Some of the courses that should be revised are bookkeeping, typing, economics, beauty culture, domestic art, and mechanics.
2. The community and school should cooperate in seeing that its graduates are gainfully employed; that is, the graduates should have first chance in the community when a job is to be given.
3. The school should aid its graduates in securing employment. The school should be interested enough to see that graduates receive the right type of employment.

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